

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

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Arkansas Community Correction



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The Faces of Success

Story on page 2

Offenders succeeding through ACC's Reentry Program

The photograph on the front cover is of three individuals who represent success.

Each one has made mistakes in the past, but today they work toward success each and every day.

They are graduates of a Reentry Facility Program and each one of them has made changes in their lives to ensure they stay successful in the community.

They all came in to tell their stories for videos that are used in training officers and others who work with offenders. They did so to provide hope for others who may be facing the same struggles they face, but also to help the community understand what it looks like for someone who is coming back to the community from prison.

The three are, from left to right, Lauren Holloway, Kim Sharp and Mike Avery. Following is Kim's story and the stories of others who are succeeding.

Kim Sharp

Hello! My name is Kim Sharp. I participated in the reentry program from September 2015 until March 2016 after a 12 year incarceration.

After spending over a third of my life in prison, transitioning back into society was the largest obstacle I have ever faced. I knew very few people outside of prison and after 12 years, well, the world was very different.

I am very grateful for my time in the reentry program because those months allowed me the time to slowly adjust, and comfortably find my way into the world, instead of being in a total culture shock.

By the time I actually began my parole, I already had a driver's license, some money saved, recent work history, and had met a lot of people who were very willing to assist me in my new life.

During my incarceration, I encountered so many people who had totally messed up their lives, as I had, who desperately wanted a different life, but had no idea how to go about it. The Lord touched my heart and put a desire deep within me to help others break free of the same chains that bound me in my life.

I was blessed to obtain a job at Phoenix Recovery Center, a sober living, transitional housing facility, where I have been employed for almost a year.

My job is to assist our residents in beginning a productive life, whether that be by finding employment, going back to school, or just the day to day responsibilities of living. I am so grateful for the staff here who not only gave me a chance, but have assisted me in any and every way

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to begin my career. I feel privileged to be allowed to go to work every day and have the opportunity to bless others with what I have been blessed with. I feel that my biggest accomplishment in this life is realizing that the gifts I have been given, my freedom and a second chance at life, are not only for my benefit, but should be used for the benefit of others, and I intend to live my life as a good steward of those gifts.

Michael Baker

Michael Baker has made many promises to his two children. He meant to keep them, but his addiction always got in the way.

Last June, Michael went from prison to Covenant Recovery Reentry. He kept saying he was going to work and save every penny he could so he could get a car and place to live ... because he had two people depending on him to finally get it right.

And just recently, he did ... he made good on his promises. Michael was allowed to go get his kids and take them to their new home - the one he's made for them.

The kids went to their new school in Malvern. When



the day's classes ended, Michael brought them to the reentry center to meet everyone. It was an emotional time for Michael and for the staff. They hear a lot of promises from a lot of offenders. Some are empty words. But some aren't, and that, they say makes the effort more than worth it.

Robert Higgs

Thirty years ago, Ronald Reagan was president. Bill Clinton was Arkansas' governor. Mike Tyson was heavyweight champion and Halle Berry was first runner-up in the Miss USA pageant.

And, offender Robert Higgs had a driver's license, which he would soon lose. Last month, Higgs entered the Hazel House Reentry facility with a solid plan to rebuild his life.

After three decades, he still didn't have a license. But



he does now. He just recently obtained one and he is very proud of it! We can't say it enough - reentry does work for those who are ready to change.

Dustin Mcvey

Dustin has always been a hard worker and wants to do the very best in everything he does. Unfortunately, after he found himself in a bit of trouble, he struggled to find employers that would trust him enough to hire him.

Dustin came to The Good Grid for help and worked diligently with staff to get his resume together and learn how to make a good impression when interviewing. Finally, the manager of Subway in Bryant offered him a job. Dustin started at the bottom, but through

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Offenders succeeding through ACC's Reentry Program

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hard work and dedication to the company, he has moved up to a key position within the restaurant.

Dustin says it feels good to finally have a manager that believes in him and has his back and is truly thankful that The Good Grid was there for him in his time of need. He attributes his success to his spouse who has stuck by him "no matter what." "[My spouse has] helped me through the tough times and helped me figure out the hard problems when times were really bad and seemed impossible to get through," Dustin says.

If Dustin could give one piece of advice to other returning citizens it would be to just take things one day at a time. Even when times are the hardest and you are at your worst, never doubt yourself. Dustin says,

"You can make things happen if you just set your mind to it and always know that if you give something your all and do things to the best of your ability, you can't go wrong."

Those at the Good Grid are proud to have helped strong workers like Dustin McVey find a job. His success is a powerful example of a person's ability to create the change they want to see in their life.

Stalatus Grundy

In March, Stalatus Grundy graduated from a Reentry Facility Program. Stalatus is employed full time with REMCO Contracting services in Texarkana.

This company is contracts with the local paper mills in this area. Stalatus is enjoying the work and benefits that come along with full time employment, such as the steady paycheck.

He also is enjoying spending time with his family. He has three children and a wife and looking forward to a long successful life with them.

When Stalatus was asked how why the program worked for him, he noted the classes and support. Grundy stated he took advantage of all the classes to fill his time and get everything out of the opportunity.

Stalatus did state that he initially thought the program may not be for him, because he didn't do drugs and he admitted to being upset at first.

However, the more he went to the classes he found out the program was exactly what he needed. He started listening to the counselors telling stories of people on drugs, who at one point in their lives were average people, some successful and some hard workers.

These people would go to and from work daily, taking care of their everyday lives, children, husband, wife, going to church. But when drugs were introduced

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Offenders succeeding through ACC's Reentry Program

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to their lives, they continued to feed the addiction and it ruined many of their lives. He realized that he played a part in that through his actions. Stalatus said that resonated deep into his spirit and that moment changed his life. Stalatus said, "I had to admit to the fact that I helped some mother or father not to be able to be there for their children, to start stealing, and doing things they would not do if they were in their right minds."

It made him think a lot about those broken homes that he contributed to because of greed for money and not caring about or even thinking about that person's life, and how they were neglecting everything that mattered most to them for a high. "All I wanted was the money," said Stalatus, "This has changed me and I am glad I spent that time in prison. It helped me a lot, and I can tell you this it was my first offence and it will definitely be my last."

Reentry Facility has graduation for offenders in February



Reaching out to the community to help the next generation



Officer Christopher Flowers from Area 6, shown above, spoke to the Middle School class at Greater Second Baptist church in LR during the RESPONS-I-BILITY class taught by Director Edmond Davis.

Graduates from the reentry program at Reclamation House were recognized in February.

Reclamation House is a group living facility for women, post-drug rehabilitation or incarceration, located at 534 West Washington Ave, in the heart of downtown Jonesboro. The 102-year old property features 13 bedrooms and 13.5 baths. It can house 20 reentry residents.

Reclamation House mission is to provide a safe living environment for women to reclaim their lives post rehab treatment for substance abuse and or incarceration.

Offenders learn the art of Yoga at ACC Center



Yoga is considered to be the art of living! The East Central Arkansas Community Correction Center has implemented its very own yoga class. Residents and staff are learning about harmonizing the body with the mind through the means of various breathing exercises. There are several mental and psychological benefits of yoga.

Yoga improves your psychological and mental well-being. It helps with anxiety and depression, as well as boosts memory and improves concentration. Yoga also prevents the onset of mental health conditions, which are prevalent during adolescence. Lastly, it reduces the effects of traumatic experiences, which is very beneficial to many of the Residents.

The class is held every Friday and is taught by volunteers who are yoga instructors or who have a yoga studio. These volunteers expressed how they want to give back to the community. What a great way of giving back!

Officers visit with young man who loves law

In January, the Jonesboro Probation/Parole Office had a very special visitor!

Landon Hathcoat is a local eight-year old boy with Muscular Dystrophy. Landon would love nothing more than to be a Police Officer when he grows up, but has sadly realized this will not be possible for him due to his condition. He and his mother, JoAnne, have been visiting local law enforcement departments and collecting patches and hats from law enforcement agencies all over the country.

Landon visited the Jonesboro Probation and Parole Office, and he was introduced to some of ACC's Officers and Agents. After telling him about what we do in our office, he was introduced to the local ACC SRT Team. SRT Agents Bryan Hook, Chad Jones and SRT Officer Melissia Wells explained their job to Landon and then showed him some of their gear they use as well as their cars. Landon was thrilled with getting to learn about something new and different from a police officer.



ACC staff speak to Kiwanis about Drug Court

Staff of Arkansas Probation and Parole and Mississippi County Drug Court gave a presentation to the Osceola Kiwanis Club detailing the Drug Court program. Drug Court Officer Heidi McDaniel gave a brief history of Drug Court in Arkansas and told club members about the program. They were told about the stringent program and how it allows offenders a “second chance” in life, to have their criminal charge cleared from their record and become productive, tax-paying citizens.

Advisor Jacquin Benson spoke to the club about the counseling aspect of the program and spoke of the progression of clients as they move through the program.

Assistant Area Manager Tim Warhurst relayed to club members the story of one of the recent graduates of the program who surprised Warhurst with his success in Drug Court. Warhurst told of the graduate’s previous criminal behavior and his doubts about the wisdom of admitting him to Drug Court. “I thought there was no way he would be successful at Drug Court,” Warhurst said.

This client had some issues to overcome along the way, including a 90-day stint in CACC for drug rehab but ended up 100 percent committed to sobriety and his family. He served as a mentor to other participants and became the third person to graduate from Mississippi County Drug Court. The graduate not only approved Agent Warhurst’s comments, but even called later to see how it went.

Even though Mississippi County Drug Court is more than two years old, it is still not well-known in the area and misconceptions are out there. So opportunities to spread the word about Drug Court are being sought.

Mississippi County Drug Court currently has 21 clients, who attend group counseling sessions and are tested for drug use at least twice a week.

So far, there have been six successful graduates of the program



Pictured, from left to right, is Gene Cox, Kiwanis program chairman; Agent Tim Warhurst, AAM: Drug Court Officer Heidi McDaniel; and Advisor Jacquin Benson.

ACC staffers graduate from Residential Services training

The graduating class from ACC's Residential Services Basic Training in September included Terrance Blake-more (SWC), Wayne Brandt (NEC), Jeffrey Bryant (NWC), Alexandria Davis (ECA), Rodney Dixon (SWC), Mallory Fluker (ECA),

Quinton Gary (CAC), Bonnie Gross (ECA), Carol Harrison (ECA), Derek Harrison (Omega), Jarrett Henderson (SWC), Melinda Hodge (CAC), Deandre Holmes (NEC), Kent Meeks (CAC), Iasha Medlock (ECA), Mi-cah Pickett (NWC), Reuben Rattler (SWC), Pakita Smith (ECA), Carolyn Thomas (CAC), Sharnae Thomas (NWC), Shatelia Walker-Scott (SWC), Makeena Welch (SWC), Markeeta Walton (SWC) and Ursula Williams (ECA).



ACC PPO class graduates from ALETA in September

ACC's PPO class of 32 students graduated in September with an academic average for the class of 95.28% and a firearms average of 92.22%.

The graduates are Rodrigo Almedia (Area 3), Jennifer Anderson (Area 6), Justin Barnes (Area 4), Josh Bowen (Area 1), Kenya Collins (Residential Services), Nickie Crockhon (Area 7), Tanya Curry (Area 3), Carla Griswold (Area 6), Walid Hussein (Area 1), Michelle Johnson (Area 12), Lance Marriott (Area 7), Jason McNeil (Area 6),



Robert Moses (Area 5), Kaylynn Newhard (Area 6), Daniel Potter (Area 7), Eric Power (Area 11), Nancy Raines (Area 1), Ricodaro Rainey (Area 13), Tiffany Razer (Area 4), Gregory Roberson (Area 13), Walt Selakovich (Area 7), Charles Slater (Area 2), Tiffany Taggart (Area 7), Evangella Tatum (Area 3), Jeanette Walker (Area 1), Ryan Walker (Area 2), Dee-Ann Ware (Area 5), Jarvis Webb (Area 13), Heather Wells (Area 1) and Detonda Woolfolk (Area 8).

Northeast Center ASEA members help local shelter for women by donating supplies

ASEA members pitched in to give back. Employees of NEC and Area 4 came together for a cleaning supply drive to help the Haven, a local women's shelter. Pictured L to R Officer Robin Haught-Angel, NEC HR Coordinator Rebecca Whitaker, Advisor Michelle Chapman, & ASEA Miss. County Chapter president Monica Fines (NEC Admin Spec III).



Drug Court offenders give back to ACC staff



Offenders from the 14th Judicial District Drug Court for Boone and Newton Counties voted unanimously to donate the funds they raised from a Christmas Wrapping event to Dee Conner, who is an ACC Administrative Specialist in the Harrison office. The funds will help with her medical expenses. Dee was the Drug Court Administrative Specialist 2015 – 2016. She became a great friend and advocate for the Drug Court and participants.

Reentry News from Around the State

Hidden Creek Food Donation

Giving back can be very humbling and rewarding at the same time.

We are happy to see these guys making great changes in their lives by helping others in need while they are working on their own successes. In these photos they help a local church pass out food.

Hidden Creek is a reentry facility in Little Rock that assists incarcerated individuals with a successful transition to their community.



Reentry event held at Southwest Correction Center in Texarkana

As part of ACC's reentry efforts, a Community Resource Event was held on February 23, 2017.

In late February, the Southwest Arkansas Community Correction Center in Texarkana held its first Reentry Community Resource Event.

The goal of the event was to address barriers and to provide resources to the residents housed in this facility for reintegration into their communities.

Some of the barriers addressed were where to obtain
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food, clothing, housing, health care, transportation, employment, finances, job skills, child care, and education.

More than 100 residents participated in this event.

Representatives from 16 agencies participated and showed support in making this a successful event: Arkansas Child Support Enforcement, Arkansas Department of Health Services, Arkansas Department of Human Services, Arkansas Department of Workforce, Adult Education, Arkansas Department of Correction, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Henderson State University-EOC, Life House Church, Randy Sam's Outreach Shelter, Red River Federal Credit Union, Salvation Army, Shorter College, Arkansas Community Correction Institutional Release Officer, Arkansas Community Correction Department of Probation & Parole-Reentry, and The Good Grid.



Governor's Proclamation

ACC's philosophy is to place priority on public safety

while providing opportunities for positive change.

We received a milestone in Arkansas by Governor Hutchinson proclaiming the week of April 23-29, 2017 as "Arkansas Reentry Awareness Week."

Individuals released

from incarceration come out with the intent of never returning to jail or prison but statistics show that unless barriers to reentry are reduced or removed, such as employment, treatment, housing, education, mentoring, and more than 53% of those released will return to incarceration.

Let's do what we can as a state to combat these barriers and help those returning from incarceration have a successful reentry.

ACC is excited for the opportunity to collaborate with communities that want to change the way we receive individuals released from incarceration.

Returning Home Resource Center

Great things are happening in NW Arkansas. ACC was represented by several staff at the Returning Home Resource Center open house in Springdale to meet with the public and other community leaders to bring about awareness and support for helping offenders overcome barriers to a successful reentry from incarceration back to their community.

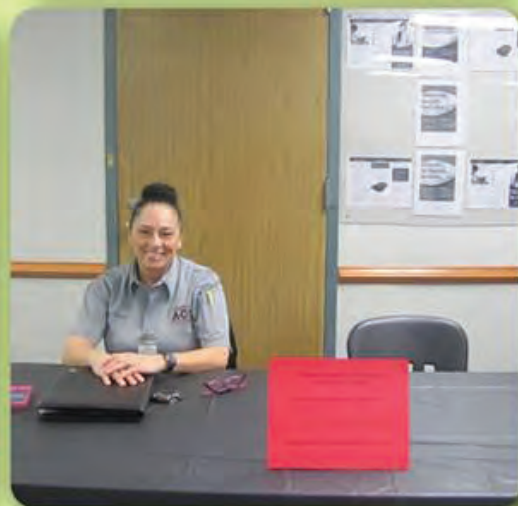
Returning Home Resource Center is dedicated to

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Reentry News from Around the State

Photographs from the Reentry event for offenders which was held at the Southwest Correction Center in Texarkana



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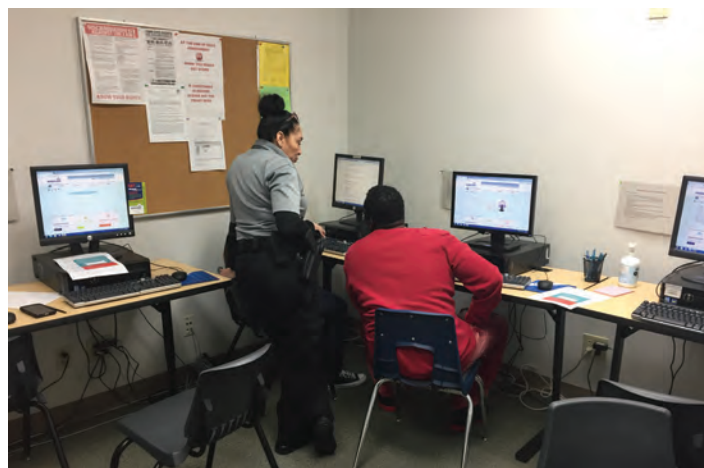
repairing lives and restoring families of NWA citizens who are imprisoned or who have been released. Returning Home will be providing multiple resources such as employment, education, life skills, substance abuse, and a host of others to help overcome barriers to reentry. Great showing of community support



Area 1 GoodGrid Training

Area 1 Reentry Officer, Kris Eglin, taught a Good Grid training workshop for service providers in north-west Arkansas. The training covered various topics including GoodGrid navigation, features, resumes, and events.

Thank you to the Rogers Public Library for the facil-



ities and thank you to all of the service providers that attended.



Conway GoodGrid Launch

The ACC Conway Office's Good Grid Launch provided service providers in the Conway area an opportunity to see a full overview of The Good Grid as well as get signed up with their own profile and organization page.



Some of the organizations that were represented included the Department of Workforce Services, Salem United Methodist Church, Community Action Program for Central Arkansas, and the University of Central Arkansas.

The Good Grid is working with these partners, and identifying more to ensure individuals returning to the
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Conway area are connected to the appropriate services to ensure their success.

Good Grid Class

Every Wednesday, Richard Perry and representatives from The Good Grid hold a three-hour resume class at the Central Arkansas Library for individuals in the area to get signed up on The Good Grid and create their resumes.

They also have applications on site for jobs that are currently open and help identify individuals that may need an outfit for a job interview.

The class is in the computer lab on the third floor of the Main Branch of the Little Rock Library. The people in front of the computers are offenders and they're here



for the Good Grid. That's ACC's top-of-the line web portal, which was developed by ProTech Solu-

tions at no cost to the state. The portal links offenders to assistance,

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The Good Grid is a network of service providers that connects organizations like yours to resources & opportunities that help you do what you do better.

The Best Part?

It is 100% free and easy to create your own page and get started

When you connect, you will be able to:

- Post volunteer & full time opportunities to the community of Arkansans who are passionate about your organization
- Access & search a database of more than 100,000 services
- Publicize events (like fundraisers, marathons, etc.) to a community of social impact minded people
- Manage a microsite for your organization

CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

SIGN UP

1. Open a Google Chrome Browser
2. Go to www.goodgrid.com
3. Click Sign up in the Right corner
4. Complete the Sign up process

1

CONFIRM YOUR ACCOUNT

1. Look for the APPROVAL email within 24 hours of signing up.
2. Click [Confirm](#)
3. Create your password and sign in.

2

QUESTIONS?

Once you sign up, if you have any questions contact us by phone, email, or a help desk ticket.

team@goodgrid.com or
(501) 687 2346

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Reentry News from Around the State

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services and jobs. The offenders are here to update their resumes, which will be matched to job listings across the state. The Good Grid can do that. So if you have offenders looking for work, they need to be on the Good Grid.

Open House

The open house for Community Transitions in Pine Bluff was held on February 1, 2017. This was an opportunity for community members to come in and see



what the facility is all about. It is located on the site of what used to be the Southeast Arkansas Community Correction Center in Pine Bluff.

The offenders who are there now are all getting ready to return to the community. Reentry centers and transitional houses can increase their chances of making it. Positive changes in their thinking, employment and learning how to be better and more productive are what offenders can gain if they apply themselves!

ACA

They nailed it. No, wait... they absolutely nailed it! Chief Deputy Kevin Murphy and Patty Sims of ACC and Nisha Garimalla of ProTech Solutions were front and center at the American Correctional

Associations mid-winter conference, and they made all of us look fantastic. They conducted a training work-



shop for conference attendees on The Good Grid, the web portal developed by ACC and Protech. It's worth about \$20 million and was created at no cost to the state. Murphy said that they "were not expecting so many people!"

What has been built in Arkansas has an excellent chance of being replicated in other states. So, if you're not using The Good Grid to help offenders find services, jobs and assistance...you need to start! And... thanks to Murphy, Sims and Garimalla for making ACC look like the pacesetter it is!!!

CBE Bearden

Ardella Bearden, Mentor Coordinator, is facilitating a Cognitive Behavioral Education class at the Hidden



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Reentry News from Around the State

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Creek Reentry Facility in Little Rock.

On February 2nd she held first first group session facilitating CBE at Hidden Creek. During the class, Bearden helps residents discuss and interrupt the negative cycle of thoughts and learn how to replace them with positive ones.

Covenant Recovery welding

The team at Covenant Recovery would like to congratulate two individuals in achieving welding certificates while participating in the Reentry program.

Michael Thompson came to Covenant Recovery on January 13 of this year. Michael has made plenty of mistakes in life that has caused him to go to prison on more than one occasion mostly due to his addiction to methamphetamine.

Michael states that he has finally gotten the opportunity to learn and be certified in something that can

help secure both him and his family.

Michael says he is tired of getting what he's always gotten out of life and is ready for something different.

He believes this is his one shot to gain the necessary tools to be productive and successful in life. Michael says that he has done wrong for so long that doing right seems wrong.

But he is willing to change everything at this time in life.

Chris Bynum came to Covenant Recovery Reentry on January 13 of this year. Coming to this program was not easy. He said, "You see prison is easy for me as I have spent most of my adult life there. Just making one stupid mistake after another."

"Coming to a program that changes your life is scary. Any change is scary. But what I have learned from this program is, I can either continue to do life on the installment plan, or learn to do something that will set

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me up for success. That's what I believe I have done by gaining a certificate in welding and obtaining a job at DLM."

"I feel as though I have officially learned a trade that will always employ me and help me be a providing father and husband, two things I have never done for any amount of time."

Covenant Recovery would like to thank DLM Dock Leveler manufacturing and College of the Ouachitas for helping our residents achieve a level of success they never thought possible.

"Bond" Fire held

Covenant Recovery Reentry in Pine Bluff held a "Bond"-fire for their residents. The event was an opportunity for residents to bond with each other and build support and morale. This is an example of reentry facilities teaching residents how to structure their leisure time with supportive activities and surround themselves with positive support.



Training held in ACC's Area 3

Eleven volunteers attend training in Searcy for case-load management. There are 12 individuals who were recently released from prison matched with volunteers

who are providing supportive case management.

The volunteers make sure offenders have their needs met and that they are engaged. Additional training was provided for each volunteer case manager on the Case Management features in The Good Grid and how to search for services and providers.

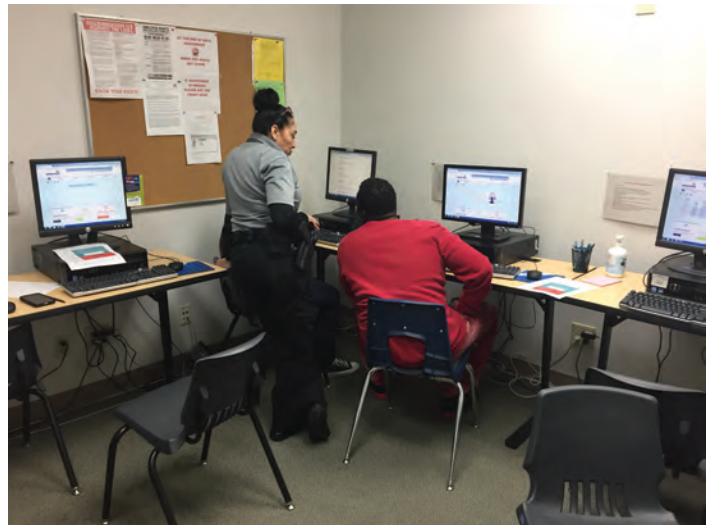


The Case Managers will meet with each individual at least weekly and provide crucial information regarding access to services in the area. Additionally, the volunteers will assist with identifying and connecting new service providers in the area.

This is a pilot project in White County in partnership with Restore Hope.

Area 12 GoodGrid class

On March 14, Officer Susan Honore in the Texarkana Office held a Good Grid class for individuals in her area who are currently unemployed and looking for employment. The class is designed to show individuals how to access the Good Grid, how to complete



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a resume, and how to create a cover letter/letter of explanation.

It is also design to teach them how to do job searches and fill out applications online and to access Arkansas JobLink through the Department of Workforce Services.

ACC Reentry Officer speaks to Rotary Club in Jonesboro

On March 11, Reentry Officer Christa Eldridge attended the Jonesboro Rotary Club St. Patrick's Day



Event. Delta Crawfish in Jonesboro employs residents from the Reclamation House Reentry facility and purchased tickets for the event. Along with Officer Eldridge is the facility director, Cathy Richardson, and current residents of the Reclamation House.

Preemployment Seminar – Area 9

Reentry Officer Markita Thompson in West Memphis holds regular Pre-Employment seminars for the offenders in her area.

The pre-employment seminar covers various topics such as how to dress, interview prep, Find a Job 101 – Q/A, and a skills assessment. The Department of Workforces Services Mobile Workforce Unit is also



available onsite for each class to allow individuals to sign up on The Good Grid, pre-test for the Career Readiness Certificate, and search for jobs.

Covenant Recovery – Trash Pickup

Residents and staff from the Covenant Recovery



Reentry Facility in Pine Bluff gave back to their community by volunteering to clean up the city.

Gordon Graduation

ACC Reentry Staff attended the ALETA Graduation for Reentry Officer Ryan Gordon. Officer Gordon graduated February 24. He is the Reentry Officer for

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Area 7/8. Reentry Staff who attended the graduation included Assistant Director Carrie Williams, Assistant Area Manager Hope Smith, Area 4 Reentry Officer Christa Eldridge, Area 6 Reentry Officer Phillip Boyd, Area 11 Reentry Officer Jeffery Little, and Transitional Housing Coordinator Daniel Potter. The Reentry team is excited to have another dedicated member to help individuals returning the Little Rock area.

Conway Computers

Computer in Conway and many others locations across the state are being set up in local Parole Area offices to give offenders a place to access The Good Grid.

The computers are designed to only allow access The Good Grid and a place to pay fees/fines. This is a great resource for offenders who may not have access to a computer at home or another location. Many offices will be getting multiple computers, which will allow officers the

ability to hold Good Grid classes for offenders on a regular basis.

Not only are these computers popping up in our Area offices, we are also implementing them in our Community Corrections Centers. These computers will help residents by allowing them to start updating a resume and searching for jobs before they are even released.



Covenant Recovery sees Reentry grads

By Katy Petrus

Director of Covenant Recovery Reentry

Covenant Recovery Re-Entry was established December 21st 2015.

We are currently licensed to hold 96 male residents.

Covenant Recovery was opened to help people who are currently incarcerated get a new start on life. When a person goes to prison there is generally a stigma that comes along with the sentence. Inmates often lose their sense of self, their self respect and find it hard to come out and obtain things such as driver's licenses, transportation and employment.

I know these things because I was once one of them.

My name is Katy Petrus, Director of Covenant Recovery Re-Entry. At Covenant Recovery we are dedicated to bringing about positive change.

When a resident comes to our center, they are welcomed and referred to by their name; no longer by their last name or their ADC number. The team at Covenant Recovery transports all residents to the DMV within the first 24 hours and begins the process to help them regain or obtain their driver's licenses. This is the first step to helping them gain independence.

As simple as this may sound, it is one of the biggest issues we face. Many times we find that the resident has an old fine that has come to the surface and a warrant has been issued that has a hold on their license. Generally, the warrant carries a mandatory court appearance that the staff of Covenant Recovery are unable to take them to, thus the hold remains and we are only able to obtain an Arkansas Identification Card. This drastically slows down the process of gaining employment.

At Covenant Recovery, we are please to say we have had nearly a hundred graduates.

Among those residents, there are several who continue to participate in our program on a daily basis. These residents want/need to stay connected to the new family they have made with us at Covenant Recovery.

James Manning was brought to Covenant Recovery March 12, 2016 after being incarcerated for more 7 and a half years. James said that he thought he was dreaming he was here until he realized that he could walk outside and no one had to supervise him. James was able to obtain his driver's license. After 21 days, James began working at JJ's truck stop in the Benton area.

Although this wasn't the best paying Job, James stuck it out and when a better paying job came along that was offered to him he quickly turned it down. His words to me were, "I can't leave them, Mrs. Katy, they treat me like family." James Manning secured his own vehicle after being employed for 130 days. I will never forget the day he was able to license and insure the vehicle in his own name. It was so great just to watch the confidence build in him. The sense of accomplishment he had was amazing.

I remember saying to myself, "this makes it all worth it." James graduated the program on December 3, 2016. It was at this time the he had saved enough to secure his own place to live and decided to relocate to the Malvern area.

Mr. Manning continues to go to work at JJ's truck stop where he has received a raise twice. Today he sits in front of me and says, "I have a family here, and they help keep me out of prison."

The family at Covenant Recovery is happy to say this is one success story we will never forget.



East Central Arkansas celebrates graduation

ACC's East Central Arkansas Center in West Memphis celebrated its April Act 682 graduation with guest speaker Dr. Jean Bell-Manning who is Shorter College's Dean of Academic Affairs. Dr. Manning provided a very inspirational and empowering message that tied in with the theme for the occasion, "Egg-cited About Sobriety!"



Every month residents who receive approval for early release participate in an Act 682 graduation celebration.

This particular graduation marks the first at ECC where family members were allowed to attend the festivities.

Some of the staff

volunteer to provide assistance with purchasing decorations, additional food items and other memorabilia to make this day even more celebratory. The staff even goes as far as to serve the residents at a mini-reception after the graduation ceremony.

Upon leaving ECC, each resident is given a nice bag, also donated by staff, to place their belongings in. These bags also are filled with useful items the former residents can use after they have been released from the center.



East Central Arkansas celebrates graduation

Photos from the Act 682 graduation



MADD Victim Impact Panel works with ACC

By Jodi Howard, CS, CCDP-B, ADC, CTTS, ACC Assistant Director for Residential Treatment

MADD Arkansas State Program Director Pamela Sell has agreed to provide MADD VIP class services at ACC's six residential facilities in partnership with the agency and its treatment programming to assist in the efforts to achieve driver's licenses for individuals released into the community.

This partnership with the coordination of Program Specialist Marcovous Williams at the Central Arkansas Community Correction Center will assist in providing this requirement for the residents to remove one barrier to successful reentry to the community.

The first approved Victim Impact Panel was held at the Central Arkansas Community Correction Center in February 2017.

One of the residents said after the completion of the VIP, "Wow, that's intense, I won't drink and drive again. Thank you for doing this for us."

During the VIP class, some alarming Impaired Driving statistics from 2014 in Arkansas were reviewed with the residents:

- 109 deaths- alcohol related crashes
- 206 deaths- alcohol/drug related crashes
- 1826 injuries- alcohol/drug related crashes
- 44% of all traffic fatalities in Arkansas are alcohol/drug related which is higher than the national average (40%)

****Statistics and History provided by MADD****

The MADD Victim Impact Panel Program

MADD Victim Impact Panels provide victims of this tragic crime a structure and safe forum to speak to offenders who have been arrested for a drunk/drugged driving offense. These stories focus on the physical, emotional, and financial impact a substance impaired crash has on their lives as well as on their families, friends and neighbors. These panels offer a healing experience for the victim and valuable education for the offender. The comprehensive MADD VIP program is guided by best practices and led by trained MADD staff and volunteers. MADD offers the only victim impact panel program that puts panel fees to work to fight drunk driving and serve victims locally.

History of MADD's Victim Impact Panel Program in Arkansas

MADD began conducting VIPs in 1986. By 2006, approximately 120 local MADD offices hosted VIPs across the country. In 2014, MADD hosted more than 3,000 panels and spoke to nearly 190,000 offenders. What started as a simple speaking invitation has turned into a robust program where VIPs are a routine sentencing option in many courts and an educational track in many driving programs and schools. In 2009, the Arkansas Legislature passed several bills that have strengthened the state's DWI laws and have aided in reducing fatalities due to DWI crashes in the state. This included the passage of 5-65-121 Victim Impact Panel attendance. This legislatively mandated DWI offenders to complete a MADD VIP as a condition of having his/her driver's license reinstated after administrative suspension due to a DWI arrest.



Therapeutic Community training held



New York Therapeutic Communities, Inc. traveled to Arkansas to complete the second round of training in Therapeutic Community (TC) best practices sponsored by the Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) ACC grant funding.

Seep Varma, Vice President, and Ron Williams CEO of the company and founder of the Stay'n Out program in New York provided education, consultation, and training in basic key elements of the therapeutic community in a prison setting. Once again, they said Arkansas is doing great work, and the training participants were enthusiastic about their jobs and fully participated in the training process, which included experiential community procedures and activities.

ACC Deputy Director Jimmy Banks and Assistant Director Jodi Howard attended the graduation ceremony and provided vision and

goals on the direction ACC residential services to take this training forward and apply in the units in key areas for consistency and adherence to best practices. The staff developed action plans and will review in each program over the upcoming months following this training to increase fidelity and services offered.

What is a Therapeutic Community's Approach?

TCs have a recovery orientation, focusing on the whole person and overall lifestyle changes. This process is gradual and ongoing for cognitive change through clinical interventions.

As program participants progress through the stages of recovery, they assume greater personal and social responsibilities in the community.

The goal is for a TC resident to leave the program not only drug-free but also employed or in school or training.

With emphasis on social learning and mutual self-help, individual participants take on some of the responsibility for their peers' recovery.

This aid to others is seen as an important part of changing oneself. (De Leon, 2015.)

A key part of the recovery orientation is that it is recognized that people will need options for ongoing support once they complete residential treatment at the TC to promote a healthy drug-free lifestyle and help them avoid relapsing. Relapse Prevention is a part of the program, aiming to increase awareness and building coping skills both to reduce the likelihood or frequency of relapse and its severity if and when it does occur.

As they move toward completion of a TC program, participants are aided in connecting with a form of

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Therapeutic Community training held for ACC staff

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aftercare and self-help groups in the community.

This is an ACC policy and procedure for those residents released to probation/parole following program completion at a Community Correction Center to participate in the mandatory Continuing Care Program held by the Substance Abuse Treatment Program at the local offices.

This program is six months in duration with the first 12 weeks consisting of weekly group sessions and one individual session per month for the last three months to ensure stability on probation/parole.

Are Therapeutic Communities Effective?

In one word, YES (Hubbard et al., 2003). Length of time in treatment was found to be important for TCs as with other treatment modalities.

Research clearly demonstrates the longer time in treatment is associated with better outcomes (De Leon, 2012).



Are you looking for a job?

**Arkansas Community Correction hires
professional staff throughout the state for
positions ranging from
Correctional Officer to Counselor to
Probation Officer.**

**For information about applying for a job at
ACC, go to:
www.arstatejobs.com**

www.arstatejobs.com

Southwest Center holds Volunteer Dinner

In appreciation of its many volunteers, the Southwest Arkansas Community Correction Center in Texarkana held a dinner to fete the men and women who work to help the center and its residents. Awards also were presented to volunteers. These photos are from the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. The Center also recognized volunteers they have nominated for one of several ACC Awards.



David Stanphill, shown below with Center Chaplain Bradley Warbritton at left and Center Supervisor Steve Arnold at right, is being nominated by the center for ACC's Faith-Based Volunteer of the Year. ACC's awards for volunteers - The Pillar Awards - will be presented later this spring.



Southwest Center holds Volunteer Dinner



Shorter College, shown above, will be nominated by the Southwest Center for a Pillar Award - Criminal Justice Partner Volunteer of the Year. David Kassos, shown below with Center Chaplain Bradley Warbritton at left and Center Supervisor Steve Arnold at right, will be nominated for ACC Mentor Volunteer of the Year.



Southwest Center holds Volunteer Dinner



Pam Warren, shown above with Center Chaplain Bradley Warbritton at left and Center Supervisor Steve Arnold at right, will be nominated for ACC Educator Volunteer of the Year. In addition to the nominees for awards, the center also presented certificates of appreciation for volunteers and enjoyed the fellowship of the volunteers as seen in the photos on the following page.



Southwest Center holds Volunteer Dinner



Northwest residents work in local cemetery



A service crew of 10 female residents and staff from the Northwest Arkansas Community Correction Center in Fayetteville spent a cold January morning removing wreaths from grave sites at the National Cemetery in Fayetteville. Their efforts were acknowledged by an invitation to come back and assist as needed.



Local church helps former resident with rent



Pastor Glenn Hersey and Annette Thomas-Jones visited the home of Michael Sellers in North Little Rock to present his landlord, Rock of Hope represented by Karen McConnell, a check to cover three months of rent for Michael. Michael's name was recommended by Chaplain David Austen who works at ACC's Central Arkansas Correction Center in Little Rock. The housing assistance is part of the Saint Mark Church's efforts to help our brothers and sisters who have been incarcerated as they transition back into their communities.

Marching for a cause

A Men's March Against Domestic Violence took place around the Harrison (Area 2) square in October to bring awareness to domestic violence.

The participants - men - wore high heels for the event



and some even wore skirts, see the photo at right that includes retired Circuit Judge Rob McCorkindale in the pink skirt.

The event raised more than \$6,000 for the Sanctuary House located in Harrison. Participating in the event was the Boone/Newton County Drug Court from the 14th Judicial District.

Whitney Gass appointed to Board of Corrections

Whitney Gass of Magnolia has been appointed by Governor Asa Hutchison to the Arkansas Board of Corrections. Gass replaces Dr. Mary Parker-Reed who served 23 years.



Lonoke office celebrates recovery for offenders in specialty courts



Acknowledging the effectiveness of specialty courts was the focus of a picnic luncheon the ACC Lonoke Office hosted last fall. The event was held on the Lonoke County Court house lawn in recognition of National Recovery Month.

Circuit Court Judge Sandy Huckabee, shown below speaking to the crowd, said, "We believe in Drug Court and Veteran's court.

It reduces crime, according to statistics provided at the National Drug Court Conference approximately 75 percent never re-offend."

Judge Huckabee further noted that Drug Court initiatives save money saying that "for every \$1 spent for drug court, \$27 is saved in the prison system, with an average savings of \$13,000 per drug court participant".

The luncheon was well-attended by community and state leaders including Lonoke Sheriff John Staley, Lonoke Chief of Police Patrick Mulligan, Arkansas State University Criminal Justice Professor Dr. Dawn Phillips and the full staff of Lonoke Probation and Parole, including Assistant Area Manager Kim Lloyd, Area Manager Jim Cheek and Deputy Director of Probation/Parole Services Jerry Bradshaw.

Several Drug Court clients attended in support of the program initiatives, giving credit to ACC and specifically the efforts of Drug Court personnel in assisting in their continued sobriety.

Wendy Founds, a former Drug Court client, offered a personal testimony to her sobriety and the importance ACC played in her recovery efforts. Wendy has advocated for the Recovery Centers of Arkansas for the past nine years.

Dr. Phillips, ASU Beebe, spoke to the national initiatives, among them is the Redeem Act, which addresses issues of reducing recidivism through restoring individual rights such as employability efforts, stating "recovery is not an individual program, it is a community and state ideology."

Former addicts Jason Heflick and Jimmy McGill credited both the Drug Court staff and the law enforcement community with their success, saying that "it works, I'm proof of that."

Staley said that "it's more than just putting people in jail it's more about making an impact on people lives."

Mulligan also noted that employability among offenders is key in their success and he has worked with local business on developing a resource list for offenders.



Area 6's Conway office was recognized for teamwork



Pictured is Officer Audriana Passafiume, Officer Stephanie Turner, Officer Preston Jones, Officer Terrez Grider, Officer Christopher Flowers, Officer Caitlin Avant and Officer Dean McKendree

By Assistant Area Manager Cornelia Lasker and Area Manager Dana Alberson, Parole/Probation Area 6 writing about the Conway Parole/Probation officers winning the Teamwork award at the 6th annual Law Enforcement Award Banquet in Faulkner County.

Over the years society has changed a lot. As a country we set records in the Olympics, developed several treatments for cancer, created new inventions, and even continue to improve technology.

However, we still remain divided. We fight for common ground on things like freedom of speech and gun rights.

We are being overtaken by the media concerning the presidential election, Black Lives Matter, Gay Rights, and the immigration process. It's amazing how in Conway, Arkansas, a group of 18 individuals from different races, gender, ages, financial status, education levels, and religious beliefs managed to achieve unity.

These officers refused to let the stress of society prevent them from doing their jobs. They are walking examples displaying the power of unity.

The amount of work required for a Parole/Probation Officer is often under rated.

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Area 6's Conway office was recognized for teamwork

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The average day for an Officer consist of assessments, supervision plans, and transporting, arresting, home visits, conducting hearings, going to court, writing reports, counseling, and training and overall public safety. Not only do these men and women put themselves in danger doing home visits and transporting offenders, but they risk their lives seeing offenders who come into the office daily and may not be having a good day.

The average caseload is about 170 active convicted felons to one Officer. You will never hear these officers complain about being asked to complete a task. They are quick to fill in for a fellow officer that may be out or just in need of additional assistance. They have each other's back through the good and bad times. When the pressure builds up you will hear, "Go Squad. We do good work" in the hallway or written at the bottom of an email.

As an agency, they came together not knowing each other, introducing new personalities and bringing years of various employment and education experience to the table. It didn't take long before they formed a bond called family. They developed their own language by creating nicknames that match each Officer's personality such as: Shrek, Donkey, Suit, Hair, Flip, Magic Mike and Captain America to name a few. Each bringing to life its own connection to the job. These officers created their own community within the Faulkner County Probation/Parole office and decided that unity mattered. They have managed to replace terms such as "I" with "we" & "me" with "team."

Henry Ford said, "Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is a progress. Working together is success." The Faulkner County Parole/Probation Office is an example that with unity and hard work, even the stress of society can be conquered. I can honestly say, "Go Squad...You truly do great work and each of you are appreciated every day for what you do.

AAM Cornelia Lasker is shown at right introducing Officer of the Year Nominee Officer Scharvundrick Franklin (Conway Office). Standing behind her is MC Matt Mosler. Below are members of the Conway Parole and Probation Office accepting an award for teamwork.



Omega hosts annual Community Advisory meeting and luncheon

The Omega Technical Violator Center in Malvern hosted its annual Community Advisory Board meeting and luncheon in late 2016.

Director Sheila Sharp, Chief Deputy Director Kevin Murphy, Deputy Director of Residential Services Jimmy Banks and many other central office management personnel along with local city officials and community dignitaries were among the 49 in attendance.

Banks was the guest speaker for the event. Interim Warden Steve Arnold welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked them for their cooperation with ACC and the Omega TVC.

Director Sharp spoke to those in attendance and emphasized how important it is to have community involvement in helping to prepare our residents for productive lives within the surrounding community.

Major Robert Wiley provided an overview of the Omega TVC program from the security view point. Valinda Rollins, Treatment Supervisor, provided an explanation of the various treatment programs offered to the residents of Omega, and Health Administrator Tracy Poole provided information on the medical services provided to the residents. The meeting was informative and steps were made to strengthen the working relationships between ACC Omega and the community of Malvern.

